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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DICARLO'S JUNE 30 MEETING WITH IDF BG
HEYMANN ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSCR 1701

Classified By: Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Brigadier General Yossi Heymann, who leads the IDF delegation to the UNIFIL monthly tripartite meetings, told Ambassador DiCarlo on June 30 that Iran and Hizballah are the major Israeli concerns when discussing the implementation of UNSCR 1701. Israeli overflights of Lebanon are directly tied to continued Hizballah armament, he stressed, noting that Hizballah can harm Israel more right now than can Iran. He described how Hizballah evades UNIFIL and Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) checkpoints to move rockets south of the Litani River and hide them in Shia villages, often underground, since UNIFIL and the LAF control the open terrain. He questioned whether UNIFIL peacekeepers want to confront Hizballah or just maintain the calm. He stressed the need for the international community to focus on enforcing the arms embargo across the Lebanese-Syrian border and enhancing Lebanese border control and urged the U.S. to share intelligence about arms transfers with skeptical Council members. He said the IDF is ready to withdraw from northern Ghajar once a political decision is made, but Israeli Charge Ambassador Carmon noted the significant civilian issues. BG Heymann said the IDF views the results of the Lebanese parliamentary elections positively but it is waiting to see the composition of the new government and its relationship with Hizballah. End summary.

12. (C) Ambassador DiCarlo met with Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Brigadier General Yossi Heymann on June 30 to discuss UNSCR 1701 implementation. BG Heymann who is the head of the Research, Policy Planning, and Liaison Branches leads the IDF delegation to the regular tripartite monthly meetings with Lebanon, most recently held on June 24, chaired by UNIFIL Force Commander Graziano. BG Heymann described the monthly trilateral meetings as "very positive" since they are the only opportunity for the IDF to meet directly with their Lebanese counterparts to try to reduce the tension.

Iran/Hizballah:
the primary focus

13. (C) BG Heymann stressed that implementation of UNSCR 1701 cannot be separated from the regional context, given Iran's influence over Hizballah. He said that Israel assesses Iran as one year away from obtaining a nuclear device but that Iran is moving carefully in order to not trigger a showdown with the international community. On UNSCR 1701, he specifically attributed Israel's continuing reconnaissance overflights of Lebanon (note: which are technically a violation of UNSCR 1701) to Hizballah's continuing armament since Hizballah can create more damage to Israel than can Iran, at the moment. He said that the day Hizballah dismantles its military structures, Israel will end its overflights. Until that day, the overflights are the only tool that provides the IDF with the appropriate information. (Note: He also commented that UNIFIL will double or even triple count the same flight in its daily overflight count as

the plane crosses and re-crosses UNIFIL's area of operations.
End note.)

14. (C) BG Heymann described a recent transfer of rockets from Syria into Lebanon, and noted that some of the rockets had been transported south of the Litani River. He described how Hizballah uses convoys of small civilian reconnaissance vehicles to identify where the LAF and UNIFIL checkpoints are located in order to evade them. He assessed that every Shia village in southern Lebanon has rocket and anti-tank capabilities now. In 2006, 75 percent of the rockets were launched from open terrain, now most, he said, would be launched from inside villages, since UNIFIL and the LAF have done such a good job of patrolling the open terrain. He said he transfers each month to UNIFIL a notebook with intelligence information identifying where rockets and Hizballah command posts are located so that UNIFIL can check the sites out. Every time, he said, Hizballah is tipped off by elements inside the LAF (since UNIFIL patrols with the LAF) and either hides the rockets, usually underground, or brings in children to stone UNIFIL vehicles, thereby preventing UNIFIL's movement to the site in question. (Note: In DPKO reports from UNIFIL, there are reports of UNIFIL movements being hindered by crowds of stone-throwing civilians. End note.)

15. (C) BG Heymann also questioned whether some of the UNIFIL peacekeepers really wanted to seriously confront Hizballah in the area of operation and risk losing peacekeepers or just "keep the calm." He recalled the June 24, 2007 attack against the Spanish battalion which led to the death of six Spanish peacekeepers. He said that battalion had been

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specifically targeted by Hizballah because it had been "too efficient" in the execution of its duties.

16. (C) Israeli Charge Ambassador Carmon referred to the Secretary-General's recent quarterly report, which he said the Israeli Mission considers the weakest one it had seen to date on Hizballah. PolOff responded that there is always a difference in tone between the UNSCR 1701 and UNSCR 1559 reports in terms of Hizballah, but noted that the most recent UNSCR 1701 report does mention the serious challenge to the Lebanese government posed by Hizballah's military capacity, Hizballah's statements of assistance to Palestinian groups in Gaza, the need for the Lebanese government to move forward with the disarmament of armed groups through the national dialogue process, and that regional states, particularly those with ties to Hizballah, are obliged to abide fully by the arms embargo. Carmon agreed that those elements were in the report and hoped the U.S. would place great emphasis on them during the Council's July 7 consultations on the report. He also noted that DPKO staff had told BG Heymann in their meeting earlier that day that the Israeli mission should not press DPKO on the report since Israel is one of the parties but should talk to the French and U.S. missions and have them ask the tough questions, to which DPKO will be obliged to respond.

Need greater focus on
arms embargo; border control

17. (C) BG Heymann encouraged greater focus by the international community on enforcing the arms embargo through enhanced border control. He also commented that U.S. interaction with Syria is positive if it means pulling Syria away from the Iranian axis. Ambassador Carmon stressed the need to implement the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team's recommendations, as called for in several of the quarterly UNSCR 1701 reports. BG Heymann specifically called on the U.S. to share intelligence information on cross-border arms transfers with other Council members in order to convince the skeptics that arms are moving across the border, since the UN says it cannot provide any evidence to that

effect.

IDF ready to withdraw
from northern Ghajar

18. (C) BG Heymann said that the IDF "knows how to arrange the withdrawal" from northern Ghajar, but it is a political issue to decide how to handle the civilian aspects of a withdrawal. He did acknowledge that he believes dividing the village with the Blue Line was a mistake. He suggested that land should have been taken from one side or the other in order to keep the village whole, as was done in two other cases. Ambassador Carmon noted that the civilian issues are significant, given that all of the inhabitants are Israeli citizens and have legal recourse should they disagree with the government's decision.

IDF view of Lebanese politics

19. (C) On the June 7 Lebanese Parliamentary elections, BG Heymann said the IDF viewed the results positively and attributed them to U.S. actions toward Lebanon, the 2006 conflict, and May 2008 when Hizballah turned its weapons on Lebanese citizens which was a tactical win but a strategic loss for Hizballah. BG Heymann said that the GOI believes most Lebanese do not want Shia dominance in Lebanon, but caveated that Israel would be closely watching the cabinet formation process, including the next government's relationship with Hizballah.
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